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AN ACCOUNT OF
CHARLES PRICE'S
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A PRICE in Disguise.

3 of these Memoirs.

Vol. 8. Feb. 10th 1786.

2
A NEW EDITION.

Being a more minute and particular Account of that consummate *Adept*
in *Deception*.

CHARLES PRICE,

Otherwise PATCH,

MANY YEARS A

STOCK-BROKER AND LOTTERY-OFFICE-KEEPER

In LONDON AND WESTMINSTER :

In this Edition the *whole* of his various FORGERIES and FRAUDS are circumstantially related ; together with his Origin, and all the material Occurrences of his Life, equally disgraceful to human Nature, till he began that desperate Undertaking of

Forgeries on the Bank of England.

In the carrying on of which, he, in the most artful and surprising Manner, baffled every Mode of Detection, set on foot by the Directors and the Magistrates of Bow-Street, for a Series of Six Years.

With this Edition is given, as a Frontispiece, an exact Representation of his Person, in the Disguise he wore when he negotiated his first Parcel of Counterfeit Bank Notes, in the Year 1780, and likewise another Portrait of him in his usual Dress.

L O N D O N.
PRINTED FOR THE EDITOR.

(By whose Permission a part only of these MEMOIRS first appeared in the
ENGLISH CHRONICLE.)

And Sold by G. KEARSLEY, at No. 46, in Fleet-Street

MDCCLXXXIII

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P R E F A C E.

A PART of these extraordinary Memoirs, which record the transactions of the most finished and notorious cheat that ever disgraced human nature, appeared originally in a new evening paper, called the ENGLISH CHRONICLE, which is rapidly hastening to an extensive circulation, in consequence of the proprietors unexampled diligence, in obtaining matter both interesting and entertaining to lay before their readers.

To preserve them from so fugitive a situation, they are here correctly printed, at a small expence, in one pamphlet, which cannot be read too attentively; it will strongly impress upon the mind of every reader, a new proof, if such were wanting, of the justice of an old observation, viz. "Honesty is the best Policy."

Had the hero of this tale (which must astonish beyond description all who read it) taken but a small portion of the pains in reputable pursuits, which he did in those of quite an opposite nature, he would, in all probability, have been a useful member of society.

The frontispiece is an exact representation of Price's whole figure, when he disguised himself to negotiate the first parcel of counterfeit Bank Notes. Vide the Advertisement in Pages 13 and 14.

The other Figure represents him in his common dress—his features were remarkable, and the likeness is exceedingly strong.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE rapid sale of the first edition of this work has been equalled only by the marked indignation, which a candid Public has shewn to the most pitiful piracy that ever disgraced the records of illiberal imposition.

Could we compliment Mr. Ridgeway by terming his mutilated production a Copy of our First edition, we should, even then, stamp some credit on such a literary abortion; but, as the whole of the publication contained not two thirds of that edition, we shall only observe, that the unfairness of the attempt kept pace with the audacity of the falsehood, viz. "That it was published by Order of the Directors of the Bank of England!"

But, having been detected by the very best authority, that truly respectable one he so wantonly made use of, he, like a true usurper, was resolved to let his catastrophe be as bold as his treason; and, as the ne plus ultra of ungenerous fiction, had the modesty to caution the public against the identical work he so piratically mutilated.

As a generous public, (whose curiosity we shall ever esteem it our duty to gratify, whenever offences are committed against the public) has done us both strict justice, by the encouragement shewn to one, and the pointed disapprobation of the other, we shall leave the narrow Plagiarism in that obscurity to which it is so meritedly consigned. At the same time returning our humble and warm acknowledgments to the gentlemen of the Bank in general, and to Abraham Newland, Esq. principal cashier, in particular, for empowering us to expose the unhandsome undertaking

in the

THE
H I S T O R Y
OF
CHARLES PRICE.

WHEN FIELDING wrote his History of a GREAT MAN, the hero of his tale possessed no other requisites for such an appellation, than having been at the head of a gang of pitiful pick-pockets, foot-pads, and receivers of stolen goods. We hardly need inform the reader, that we allude to his life of JONATHAN WILD.

Such, however, were the abilities of the ingenious author, that, in his hands, the life of the lowest reptile gave very high satisfaction.

The History of CHARLES PRICE differs as much from that of JONATHAN WILD, as the face of a Chimney-sweeper does from the complexion of Prince Oroonoko.

The lives of the famous Czar Peter, and Charles XII. by Voltaire, afforded that genius an opportunity of displaying his wit, by the most laconic and satyrical transposition. He styled the King, Charles the Great, and the Emperor, the Great Peter.

This forcible distinction of characters is applicable

cable to the two first-mentioned great men. Mr. Wild must remain as the GREAT JONATHAN, but *our* hero, Mr. Price, will for ever live as CHARLES THE GREAT.

In relating the transactions of this eminent villain, it would be some satisfaction to us if we could adhere to that wise and ancient maxim, *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*; for it was founded in charity to the dead—it humanely supposed, that the deceased had some good qualities to counterpoise his bad ones, and, therefore, that the latter ought to glide, with the body, into a silent grave. But Mr. Price was an exception to the supposition. With every bad qualification, those who knew him most intimately, cannot recollect he possessed even one that was good; and not having it in our power to relate any of his virtues, truth and justice will not allow us to bury his vices.

His father, Charles Price, was by trade a taylor, came from South Wales, about the year 1702, and worked as a journeyman at several places in London. In the year 1710 he got into Monmouth-street, as a journeyman to a salesman there, and this laid the foundation of the most curious scenes that ever dignified the fertile invention of dissipated knavery. By a strict application to his profession, Mr. Price was, in a few years, enabled to set up as a master in the trade, and kept a sale-shop the corner of Earl-street and West-street, Seven Dials. Some time previous to this, he had married, but we are not able to furnish any account of our hero's mother; nor would it be any ways material to this history, if we could, otherwise than that she was a servant in that neighbourhood, a woman who bore a very good character, and has been dead some years.

The character of Mr. Price was, that he was a very clever man in his business, but very illiterate, and equally proud.—That he was exceeding artful, and the flower of Monmouth-street for oratory in the sale of his goods. At the same time, he was sincere in his friendships, despised downright knavery, and had a regard to reputation. He had two sons, the eldest was named *Thomas*, the second, our hero, *Charles*, and one daughter, who now lives in the same street, with credit and reputation. Thomas was bred to his father's business, and died at Portsmouth two years ago. He married an orange-girl from the Haymarket, whom he has left a widow with one child. Before we dismiss him, we shall relate one anecdote, which proves him allied to his younger brother. A Mr. Creed, salesman in Rosemary-lane, used to send him with a cart loaded with goods round the country; and Mr. Creed dying, honest Thomas decamped with the produce of one journey, which was about 200l. Sir Samuel Fludyer was assignee to Mr. Creed, and Tom taking care never to return till after Sir Samuel's death, the creditors were robbed of that sum. Suffice it to say of him further, that for this, and other similar acts of knavery, his father served him as he did his brother Charles, leaving them only a shilling each and the whole of his property to his daughter.

To return to our hero.—When he was about five years of age, he was sent to a school in Queen-street, near Soho Square, kept by a Mr. Bearmore, and his father, seeing him a lad likely to improve, removed him to Mr. Knollet, who kept an academy in Queen-street, Seven Dials. It was there he first acquired the rudiments of the French language, and, as is too often the case, whilst he was

taught *French* by a *Swiss*, his native language was neglected, so that he was neither complete in one or the other. At this school he continued till he was about twelve years old, and then he was taken home to assist his father, where he soon gave proofs of an early address in his profession, which the following instance will explain.

A sailor had staggered to Monmouth-street, to buy some cloaths, and was caught by our hero at the corner, who soon introduced him into a room, where it is so ingeniously contrived, that in the noon of a summers day, it is hardly possible to distinguish a blue from a black, or a green from a blue coat. The honest tar was shewn a coat and waistcoat, the real value of which was about two guineas. Though they were considerably too little, Charley squeezed him up, and persuaded the fellow that they fitted him exactly.—The price being demanded, Charley declared upon his honour, that the lowest farthing he could take was five guineas. The tar, who simply believed that no man was capable of so solemn an assertion to an untruth, put his hand in his pocket, and laid down the money. Charley's cunning, which had ever been deficient when an advantage could be taken in an honest way, suggested to him that five guineas for an article worth but two was hardly profit enough, and therefore stepped down to his father's journeyman below, under pretence of getting something to put the cloaths up in, to him Charley lamented his folly, adding, that he had a *fine flat* above stairs, and that he might as well have had six guineas as five." "Do you," said he, "follow me up stairs, enquire what I have done, pretend to be very angry, swear they cost you six guineas, give me two or three
"kicks

“kicks or cuffs, and I dare swear we shall get
 “more money out of him, and then, as my father
 “is not at home, you shall go halves in all we get
 “above the five guineas.” The scheme was readily acquiesced in by the journeyman. Charley slipped up stairs, and presently the journeyman followed. Inquiry, blame, and sham blows ensued; the journeyman swore the cloaths cost him six guineas out of his pocket, and was going to beat Charley again, when the sailor cried, “Avast, “master, don’t beat the boy, if he has made a mistake in a guinea, why here it is,” and laying it down, departed well pleased with his bargain, but more so at having saved the lad a drubbing by the insignificant trifle of an additional guinea. The fact is, Charley gave his father two guineas, the journeyman half a one, and kept three guineas and a half to himself.

Though this was one of the tricks of trade, and perhaps by a jury of commercial casuists the verdict may be “JUSTIFIABLE DISHONESTY;” yet the event proved that it was the seed of knavery, which, ripened by the dunghill of an over-reaching inclination, poisoned the soil it very rarely fertilizes to advantage.

But as all vice rises progressively, it was not long before the father experienced the effects of his son’s genius. And with this observation we cannot but lament, that the method he took to rob his father was an early indication of the scheme which led to his immediate destruction. Our hero had formed a connection with a youth of suitable principles with his own, and being between fifteen and sixteen years of age, they agreed upon an *excursion*. They each proposed ways and means, but Charley’s companion not having it in his

power to procure a sufficient sum for the purpose, our hero hit on an expedient as artful as availing. His father was out of town, and he forged a draft in his name, on a gentleman with a letter, in which he requested the favour of 20l. for an immediate purpose. The gentleman accepted it, and his banker paid the sum, which Charley obtained, and was never seen for a week afterwards, when he and his companion were found at a house of reception in Covent Garden. It is easy enough to conceive the confusion between Mr. Price and the gentleman, when they first met, and how shocked the father must have been at such an instance of depraved ingenuity in his son. He readily paid the money, and had not the transaction happened between friends, our hero perhaps would then have paid that fee to a certain esquire of the county of Middlesex, of which he lately so ill-naturedly deprived him, when in custody for forgery in Tothilfields Bridewell.

Numberless had been his tricks and knaveries, but this last determined his father to get rid of him, and, for that purpose, he put him apprentice to a hatter and hosier in St. James's-street, giving with him a considerable premium to his master, hoping that his conduct, when abroad, would be quite different from what it had been at home, and that he would never dare to take the same liberties with a master he had done with a father. This is a very common opinion, and as vague as it is common. The son that will cheat a father, will cheat the whole world; and to put such a son to another person, is like sending him to sea to mend his manners. The chance of his being drowned is indeed in their favour; but the proverb of, *He that is born to be hanged will never be drowned,*

drowned, militates against this sorrowful expedient.

When about seventeen years of age, he was apprenticed as aforesaid, and there he had not been long, before his master had almost as much reason to complain of him as his father. Among his other tricks, was the following extraordinary one. He robbed his father of an elegant suit of cloaths, in which he dressed himself and went to his master, of whom he purchased about 10*l.* worth of silk stockings, left his address, Benjamin Bolingbroke, Esq. Hanover Square, and ordered them to be sent him in an hour's time, when he would pay the person who brought them. Incredible as it may appear, his master did not know him, and to complete the cheat, our hero came back in half an hour, in his usual dress, was ordered to take the goods home, which he actually pretended to do, and thus robbed both master and father. This was the last trick, however, he had in his power to play either of them, for being detected, he ran away from the former, and the latter, in detestation of his principles, disinherited him of that share which otherwise would have fallen to him at his father's death.

Having thus left both, he entered the world and became a robber at large; nor can there be much room to doubt but that the idea of disguising himself, which he has practised for so many years past, was suggested to him by the circumstance of having been brought up where he had opportunities to shift his cloaths as he pleased. Little more can be learned of him for several years. His father lived in credit, and what is very remarkable, was the first corpse ever carried over Westminster Bridge, which was on the first day

day it was opened for carriages, when he was taken over in a hearse, surrounded by multitudes, who flocked to see the opening of so noble a structure, and was buried at Lambeth.

Thus abandoned by his father, the world lay before him where to choose. Tired of trade, which he reckoned beneath the character of a gentleman—of confinement, which did not correspond with his notions of dissipation—he became a gentleman's servant, and in that capacity lived some years, till he got into the service of Sir Francis Blake Delaval, went with him the tour of Europe, returned to England, and through Sir Francis, who was the bosom companion of the late Samuel Foote, Esq. became comedian. That he acted a principal part in that well-known business, by which Sir Francis obtained his lady, with a very large fortune, in which Mr. Foote performed the character of the conjurer, and afterwards contrived to conjure that gentleman out of 500l. in a sham scheme in the brewery, in which business that gentleman and Mr. Price were concerned. That he was made a bankrupt, and afterwards set up in the distillery, defrauded the revenue, was sent to the King's-Bench, was released by an insolvent act, again turned brewer, defrauded a very capital gentleman in that branch, now living, out of 6000l. by the assistance of the lady afore-mentioned, in one of his disguises. He was also delineated some years since in a book entitled the Swindler's Chronicle.—Became Lottery-Office-Keeper, then Stock-Broker, gambled in the Alley, was ruined by it, again set up Lottery-Office Keeper, courted Mrs. Pounteney, ran away with the niece, who was the daughter of Justice Wood in the Borough, and lived with both. We have said enough already

of his character to shew what he was capable of, and what ought to have been to him, as well as to every person breathing, a certain though stale maxim, that **HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY.**

To enumerate the various frauds and swindling transactions of this adept in deception, would swell the account beyond the possible bounds of a shilling pamphlet. From what has been already mentioned, the reader will be enabled to judge of the capability of his head, and shew the tinge of a heart, which never were at rest without levelling their attacks on his best and dearest friends. In robbing the public, he had effrontery enough to avow his depredations, and to laugh at those whom he injured; but his friends were plundered under the disguise of perfect honesty; and such was his art and finesse, that the more he plundered them, the more he secured their confidence.

The following late fact will explain Mr. Price, better than a thousand comments: .

He was very intimate with a gentleman, now living at Knightsbridge, Mr. R—s, formerly a grocer, but retired from business. The measures he took to prepare this gentleman, as a dupe to the most consummate piece of knavery, were as follow: Mr. Price had for a long time passed as a stock-broker; and his friend, Mr. R. had always entertained that opinion of him. To secure Mr. R.'s good opinion of his independent situation in life, Mr. Price, who then lived at Knightsbridge, frequently used to request the favour of Mr. R. to take a bank-note or two into the city, and get them changed into small ones. In this he had a two-fold plot. First, he made himself a man of consequence with Mr. R. and thereby laid him open
to

to his future scheme : and secondly, the identical notes which Mr. R. brought him back, served as copies for Price to engrave his counterfeit ones from. And in this Price gratified his highest stretch of dissimulation—for his *friend* became a double dupe. Matters went on in this mode of friendship, till Price found Mr. R. ready to fall a sacrifice to any plan he might propose ; and being thus ripe for the purpose, Price began the second act of his play. He then informed his friend that he was intimately acquainted with a very old gentleman, who was exceedingly rich, as well in landed as in personal estates, who had been a very eminent broker in the alley, but had long retired. That his monies in the funds were immense, and that the only relation he had in the world was one sister, to whom he intended to bequeath the best part of his property—that his sister was near fifty years of age, had never been married, was determined never to marry, and that it was impossible the old gentleman could live long, as he was very old, very infirm, and almost incapable of going out of doors. The reader, by this time, will probably begin to recollect Mr. Patch under this description, and, in fact, it meant no other. But *this* Mr. Patch, now wore the name of Mr. BOND, an inhabitant of Union-court, Leather-lane, Holborn. What could induce Mr. Price, who piled as many schemes upon schemes as there were stones in the tower of Babel, to fix on so singular a name, may perhaps be collected, if we consider that it was most probable, the name of *Bond*, sleeping or waking, was always uppermost in his thoughts ; and as he well knew that Mr. Bond of Bow-street had been yearly upon the watch for him, the name tripped

tripped off his tongue as the involuntary impulse of conscious guilt.

This old gentleman, Price represented to his friend, had often asked him to become his executor; and also often besought him to recommend another person, in whose fidelity, character, and integrity, Mr. Bond could repose an entire confidence, and that he would make it well worth their while, if they would undertake so friendly and solemn an office.—“ Now,” said Mr. Price to Mr. R. “ here is an opportunity for us to make a “ considerable sum in a short time, and, in all “ probability, a very capital fortune in a few “ years; for the sister being determined never to “ marry, and having no relations in the world, “ there is no doubt but she will leave us the whole “ of the estate, as I now stand upon such terms “ with her brother; and, after his decease, she “ will become totally dependent upon us.—I shall “ see Mr. Bond to-day, and if you will join in “ the trust, the will shall be immediately made.”

To this proposal Mr. R. readily consented, and we may venture to say without much hesitation.—In the evening Price returned to Knightsbridge. He told Mr. R. that he had seen Mr. Bond, who expressed great happiness and easiness of mind on such a recommendation, and desired to see Mr. R. the next day. Price appointed to meet him at twelve o'clock at Mr. Bond's, and in a short time after the appointed hour, Mr. R. knocked at the door.—He was shewn up stairs by the aforementioned sister lady, and introduced to Mr. Bond, seated in a great chair, his legs in another, and covered with a night-cap. We leave the imagi-

nation to supply any further description. The poor, infirm, weak, debilitated old gentleman, regretted the absence of his ever dear friend Mr. Price, the most worthy man in the world, and he rang a peal on his friendship, honour, honesty, integrity, &c. &c. accompanied with emaciated coughs—was obliged to go to the city coffee-house—a punctual man—never failed an appointment—it was the foul of business—and then he told Mr. R. that his dear friend desired to meet him there exactly at one o'clock—he approved highly of Mr. Price's recommendation, and was now happy in his mind—it wanted but a quarter to one he believed, and he hoped Mr. R. would not fail, as his dear friend was very exact indeed. The usual compliments passed; the sister conducted Mr. R. to the door, who posted away to the city coffee-house, and left old Master Bond, the rich brother, who was in reality no other than Mr. Price, and the brother's maiden sister, who was in fact Mrs. Pounteney, to laugh at Mr. R's credulity. This second act being over, the third began, and the plot began to thicken, for Mr. R. had not been five minutes in the coffee-house before he was joined by his friend Price, to whom Mr. R. recapitulated what passed at the old broker's, and as soon as Price had dispatched some pretended business, he proposed calling on Mr. Bond. This was readily acquiesced in by Mr. R. and away they drove to Leather-lane; when they came there, they were informed by the lady that her brother was just gone out in a coach on an airing to Highgate. In short, he carried on the comedy so completely for several days, during which time Mr. R. had

twice or thrice seen the old gentleman,—the will was made, and on the strength of the joint executorship, Mr. R. was swindled out of very near 1000l. in cash, and bonds to the amount of 200l. which fraud was never discovered till Mr. Price's apprehension, after which Mr. R. got up his bonds from Mrs. P. to whom he gave a note for the amount, and which he is determined never to pay.

However credulous Mr. R. may appear to people who imagine themselves wiser, or however extravagant the tale may tell, we vouch its authenticity. *Truth as given*

The following anecdote, though it proves him an artful, designing fellow, yet has nothing in it which exhibits him in his usual Proteus character. He had formed a connexion and an intimacy with Mr. W——, a brewer, a man of respect and character. To him Price, who was then in the brewery, proposed a project for purchasing hops to the amount of 2000l. Price actually went into the country, contracted for hops to that amount, with several hop-growers in Kent, and then applied to Mr. W. for the 2000l. pretending that a sudden rise of hops would take place, and they could not be delivered too soon; and that Mr. W. should have his share of the profit. Whatever were Mr. W's motives we know not, but he refused to advance the money. The fact is, an unexpected rise did soon after take place, Price went into Kent to demand delivery—the growers, perhaps not perfectly satisfied with their purchaser, were shy in delivering, especially as they found they had made a bad bargain, which Price taking

an advantage of, insisted on, and gained 200l. to be off, and was accordingly paid it. We mention this little circumstance to shew that Price *was never out of his way*, and that when he laid a trap for 2000l. his scheme, though it failed in part, brought him 200l.

He was servile to extreme meanness, where his servility could be recompenced by a shilling. He was master of the most consummate effrontery and impudence, when justice called upon him for that shilling, if unsupported by law; and he never paid it but with an eye to further plunder; and then he abounded with such professions of honesty, that all who could read mankind saw he did not possess a grain of it. In fine, he was a true Lottery-Office-Adventurer. He was also an adept in that species of flattery distinguished by us under the word *palaver*.—He possessed an extensive knowledge of men and manners, and was a proficient in reading the heart of man, and, to superficial observers, appeared a very sensible person. He was conversant in most of the living languages, had a smattering of each, but master of none, and not having had the advantages of a liberal education, he was very deficient in his own. He had travelled all over France, and Holland, and been at most of the German courts. He was at Copenhagen during the time of the unhappy fate of the late queen of Denmark, sister to our Sovereign, and he, at that time, wrote a pamphlet, clearing her of all suspicions, and in which he pointed out the true cause of that degrading attack on what was more dear to her than her life, her character, thereby to effect an intended revolution

lution in favour of the Queen Dowager's son. One of those pamphlets he gave Mr. Fenwick, the keeper of Tothilfields Bridewell, which we have lately read, and though drawn up in very imperfect language, yet it proved him to have an eye directed to the cabals of the Court, and an understanding capable of developing its intrigues. His character about the 'Change in London was well-known--he was a keen, intriguing speculator, well versed in the mystery of the Bulls and Bears--his head enabled him to make the most accurate calculations, but his heart would never permit him to enjoy the fruits of even his honest labours, if such they might be deemed, for, if possible, he never would comply with the demands of a fortunate customer, unless actually terrified into it; and to terrify him required no small portion of ingenuity and resolution.—This natural propensity to dishonesty was the spring of all his misfortunes; it made him shift from place to place to avoid the abuse of the vulgar, and the clamorous calls of lucky adventurers. His last office was the corner of King-street, Covent Garden, from whence he was driven, about six years ago, by a most unaccountable run of ill-luck, and esteemed himself happy in a private decampment.

Ever since that period, Mr. Price has lived in obscurity; and, as it was then he began his dishonest practices, it is a singular circumstance for reflection, that no man can live happy who offends against the laws of his country, particularly in those instances which, as they are the most dangerous and destructive to society, naturally call

for

for every exertion to detect, and where wisdom and power united can never fail, at last, in the accomplishment.

His domestic character was still worse—though a perfect sycophant abroad, at home he was the most absolute tyrant; nor could a prudent, beautiful, virtuous woman, endowed with every qualification to render the marriage state happy, soften a brutality of disposition, when the ample fortune he obtained with her had been squandered by him in intrigues, as pitiful as they were expensive; for with all his outward appearances of gentility, he had a degree of pride that was truly contemptible, and a mind equally low and mean.

We have thought proper to give this general outline of his character, that the reader may be enabled to form some idea of the consistency of his conduct, and be prepared for a relation of transactions equally as surprising as that character.

It has been said in the public papers, that he had employed his solicitor, appointed his counsel, arranged his affairs with prudence and wisdom for making his defence, and that opinions had been given on his case, sufficiently favourable to induce him to stand trial: not a word of this is true, except the circumstance of having engaged an attorney. If there is any meaning in the supposed favourable opinions, it is this: that changing the teller's ticket at the Bank from a small to a larger sum, payable by a cashier, was a fraud and not a forgery. Such an answer to such a case might be given by those people of the profession who are lawyers among tools, and tools among lawyers; but

but we dare assert, that Mr. Price would not have applied to any such shallow geniuses; he would have stated his case to men eminent in the profession, and conversant in the crown law; from them he must have been told, that as long as the words WARRANT, or ORDER, for payment of money, remain in the statutes, for the prevention of forgeries, they would have told him, that altering, or publishing a teller's ticket knowing it to be altered, with an intention to defraud, is a *specific* forgery; but it is evident, from the event, that Mr. Price placed no confidence in the shallow objection—he was conscious the objection would not avail him—that if his identity was proved he was undone, and his sole reliance was on the concealment of his person; and on this he so much relied, that he braved his fate, and courted the encounter, by sending for the people whom he had employed as Patch, to view him as Price; so well was he assured that they could never recognize him as the former in the character of the latter.

Before we enter upon the detail of his forgeries on the Bank of England, it may not be amiss to observe, that he had formed every requisite for the perpetuation of his plan. Like an able general, who has his eye directed more to the consequences attending a defeat, than to the pursuits of a success, previously uncertain, he prepared every measure and scheme, progressively, from the commencement of his undertaking to the final accomplishment of it. He was, therefore, never at a loss what step to pursue on any emergency. If, from any unfortunate event, he should be suspected in his mechanical operations, he took care to carry them

them on not where he lived, with Mrs. Price, his wife, but, at another lodging, with Mrs. Pounteney, where he was not even known by that name, and where could not be described by his real one. At home he was always Price. Wherever he manufactured his materials, he was in his assumed character; so that he was Price, or Patch, just as his necessity required. His plan of negotiation was the result of a mature deliberation, and formed on the same secure principle. The persons he engaged never knew him in his real character; and, as he was well convinced of the truth of the old saying, *humanum est errare*, so he took all possible precaution to be guarded against contingencies. For he never sent an emissary to negotiate a note, that he ever lost sight of him, either personally, or by his agent Mrs. Pounteney, and therefore could never be surprized in his projects.

In giving an account of this very extraordinary man, respecting his forgeries on the Bank, we shall begin where the generality of historians leave off, with an observation on his exit: conscious of his own guilt, facts hourly rising upon facts, and a public ignominious death staring him full in the face, he sunk under the weight of his own fears. Without fortitude to support him in the hour of trial, he determined to avoid the fate of a public execution, by an act of private desperation. Had his courage been equal to his skill, he would have met his fate with a modest and resolute manliness; but he rather chose to convince the world that his cowardice was as great as his cunning: from which one inference may safely be drawn, that Mr. Price is a tremendous instance that, though art and address

dress may triumph for a period, yet when public justice overtakes public offenders, human ability is the most deceitful and insufficient prop ingenious guilt can rest upon. We venture to moralize thus far upon the shocking catastrophe, because, of all his accumulated crimes, self-murder was his last and worst.

Having a large family of eight children to support, he turned his thoughts to that attempt which proved so fatal to him; and, what is very extraordinary, always has proved fatal to every man who made the attempt (and we will venture to prognosticate always will)—a forgery on the Bank of England. His first attack on the Bank was about the year 1780, when a forged note had been taken there, so complete in all its parts, the engraving, the signatures, the water-marks, &c. that it passed through various hands unsuspected, and was not discovered till it came to a certain department in the routine of that office, and through which no forgery whatever can pass undiscovered—This occasioned a considerable alarm among that great and truly respectable body of gentlemen, and notes upon notes flowed in, about the Lottery and Christmas times, without even the least possibility of tracing out the first negotiator. Various consultations were held, various plans laid, and innumerable were the efforts of detection; but in vain—they were traced up to one man from every quarter, always disguised, always inaccessible; and we will venture to pronounce, the forger would have remained much longer a secret, but for the unwearied attention and cool collected plans of Mr. Clarke, a public
D officer

officer at Bow-street, well known for his ingenuity in detecting offenders on the Bank, the Mint, &c. Indeed we may venture to say, that had he been left to his own discretion, to have followed the dictates of his own understanding, and to have carried into execution his own plans, the offender would not have reigned so long; for, although those who took upon them the office, were gentlemen of integrity and unblemished characters, they were insufficient for the undertaking, as the sagacity of Mr. Price always proved an over match for their zeal, assiduity, or stratagem. As from its very great importance to society, they took the business into their own hands, one person only excepted, they found, by experience, the inefficacy of their measures.

Had Mr. Price permitted a partner in his proceedings—had he employed an engraver—had he procured paper to be made for him, with water marks put upon it, he must have been soon discovered—but Price was himself alone; He engraved his own plates, he made his own paper, with the water-marks, and he was his own negociator, thereby confining a secret to his own breast which he wisely deemed not safe in the breast of another; even Mrs. Price had not the least knowledge or suspicion of his proceedings. Having practised engraving till he had made himself sufficient master of it, he then made his own ink to prove his own works: having purchased implements, and manufactured the water-mark, he next set himself to counterfeit the hand-writings, and succeeded so far as even to puzzle a part of the first body of men in the world. The abilities

abilities of the unhappy Ryland were exerted in his profession, and therefore the imposition was to be less wondered at; but here was a novice in the art, capable of equal deception in every part of the dangerous undertaking, and all attempts to discover him proving equally abortive; the Bank came at last to the resolution of describing the offender by the following public advertisement:

Public-Office, Dec. 5, 1780.

A F O R G E R Y.

Whereas a person, answering the following description, stands charged with forging two notes, purporting to be Bank Notes, one for 40l. and the other for 20l. whoever will apprehend him, or give such immediate notice at this office, as may be the means of apprehending him, shall receive One Hundred Pounds reward on his commitment.

Or, if any person concerned in the above forgery, (except the person here-under described) will surrender and discover his or her accomplices, he or she will be admitted an evidence for the crown, and, on conviction of any one offender therein, receive Two Hundred Pounds reward.

And, if any engraver, Paper-maker, Mould-maker, or Printer, can give information of the engraving any plate, making any mould, or paper, or printing any note resembling Bank Notes, shall receive Two Hundred

dred

dred Pounds reward, on conviction of any of the offenders in the above forgery.

He appears about fifty years of age, about five feet six inches high, stout made, very fallow complexion, dark eyes and eye-brows, speaks in general very deliberately, with a foreign accent; has worn a black patch over his left eye, tied with a string round his head, sometimes wears a white wig, his hat slaps before, and nearly so at the sides, a brown camble great coat, buttons of the same, with a large cape which he always wears so as to cover the lower part of his face; appears to have very thick legs, which hang over his shoes, as if swelled, his shoes are very broad at the toes, and little narrow old fashioned silver buckles, black stocking breeches, walks with a short crutch stick with an ivory head, stoops, or affects to stoop very much, and walks slow as if infirm; he has lately hired many hackney coaches in different parts of the town, and been frequently set down in or near Portland place, in which neighbourhood it is supposed he lodges.

He is connected with a woman who answers the following description:—She is rather tall, and genteel, thin face and person, about thirty years of age, light hair, rather a yellow cast on her face, and
pitted

bitted with the small pox, a down-cast look, speaks very slow, sometimes wears a coloured linen jacket and petticoat, and sometimes a white one, a small black bonnet, and a black cloak, and assumes the character of a lady's maid.

N. B. It is said that about fifteen months since, he lodged at Mrs. Parker's, No. 40, in Great Titchfield-street, (who is since dead) at which time he went by the name of Wigmore.

The above advertisement drove Mr. Price to his wits:—it forced him, for a time, to refrain from the circulation, and for some months put a total stop to it. The next lottery season he recommenced his schemes, and Mr. PATCH again came forth with all his secret eclat, notwithstanding every scheme that ingenuity could devise to detect them had been practised.

It is not unworthy observation, that hand-bills were delivered from house to house throughout the whole of the quarter where he was most suspected to reside, and at the very house which he daily

daily resorted to, and where all his implements were fixed. This was the neighbourhood of Marybone, Portland-place, Oxford-street, and Tottenham-court-road; nay it was thrown down an area to the only person in whom he placed any confidence, a lady whom the reader will be presently acquainted with. By these means Price was apprized of his immediate danger, and consequently took his measures accordingly;—in the common phrase, it blew him up, but it certainly was the means that prevented his then being apprehended. Eagerness to secure, banished that foresight and caution which are ever necessary whenever it is in pursuit of artful villainy. The animal, whose sagacity is a proverb, can never be secured in haste; to entrap him requires superior patience, caution, and cunning.

In the preceding part of this narrative, we mentioned that Mr. Price had no partner, no person to whom he intrusted any branch of the business of forging a bank note: we mean by that, that he employed no mechanic to assist him; but a confidant he most assuredly had, and a female, who was selected for the business with as much wisdom, as he discovered sagacity in his projects. It is no less extraordinary than true, that this confidante was his own wife's aunt, by the mother's side, with whom he had had a long and perfect intimacy, previous to his marriage with Mrs. Price. Her name is Pounteney; and what is still more surprising, he carried on the connection till the day of his death, unknown to his wife: was daily with her, divided his dinner

times

times equally between the two, and the niece had, for ten years past, through the impositions of her husband, considered her aunt either as dead, or residing abroad. For this deception we shall account hereafter; one thing we must here observe, the wife was all innocence, without art, or understanding in the ways of the world, to be what is commonly called cunning, but, perhaps, had a little reason to be jealous. In short she was perfect simplicity, and, in her juvenile days, was distinguished by the appellation of the pretty idiot — He prudently, therefore, thought her not fit to be trusted. Mrs. Pounteney, the aunt, was a character extremely opposite to that of her niece; she was really cunning, artful, and capable of executing any plan which Price would chalk out for her. In short, she was the woman after Price's own heart, and having had the judgment to select her for his operations, there is no wonder, under the tutelage of Mr. Price, she proved a justification of his choice. It is easy, therefore, to be discovered why Mrs. Price was not thought by him a fit object to be trusted with so important a secret. As he perfectly knew she was too fond of her filthy bargain, he wisely judged that a want of understanding in a pretty woman is a certain proof of the want of a necessary reservation, and that he ought to be equally apprehensive of her fondness and simplicity, in a case where his own life was immediately concerned. Having made choice of this woman as an assistant, his apparatus being all ready, he began his operations, living then at Paddington with

Mrs. Price, whom he went to nightly, and having lodgings also near *Portland-place*, where he daily visited her aunt, and where all the utensils for his undertakings were concealed. Every thing being thus prepared, his next and chief scheme was a negotiator ; for this his wits were set to work, and he procured one in the following manner.

Previous to the commencement of the lottery for the year 1780, *Mr. Price* put an advertisement into the *Daily Advertiser*, in which he required a servant who had been used to live with a single gentleman, and the direction was to *C. C. Marlborough street Coffee-house, Broad Street, Carnaby-Market*. An honest young man, who at that time lived with a musical instrument maker in the Strand, whose name for very obvious reasons we keep secret, not being much wanted by his master, and having been desired by that master to look into the papers for a place, happening to read *Mr. Price's* advertisement, he accordingly sent a letter to the *Marlborough street Coffee-house*, as directed. He heard nothing further of this for a week, when one evening, just as it was dusk, a coachman enquired for the man who had answered the advertisement, saying there was a gentleman over the way in a coach wanted to speak with him. On this, the young fellow was called, and went to the coach, where he was desired to step in. There he saw an apparent old man, affecting the foreigner, gouty, wrapped up with five or six yards of flannel about his legs, a camblet surtout buttoned up over his chin, close to his mouth, a large patch over his left eye, and every part of his face so hid, that the young fellow could not see any part of it, except his nose, his right eye, and a small part of that cheek. To carry on the deception still better, *Mr. Price* thought proper to place the man on his left side, on which eye the patch was, so that the old gentleman could

like an askaunce look at the young man with his right eye, and discover only a small portion of his face. He appeared, by this disguise to be between sixty and seventy years of age; and afterwards, when the man saw him standing, not much under six feet high, owing to boots or shoes, with heels very little less than four inches high. Added to this deception, he was buttoned up and straightened as to appear perfectly lank.

It may not be here ill-timed to those who did not know him, to give the true description of his person. He was about five feet six inches high, and a compact neat-made man, rather square shouldered, and somewhat inclined to corpulency. His legs were firm and well set, but by nature, his features made him look much older than he really was, which was *fifty-five*. His nose was aquiline and his eyes small and grey; his mouth stood very much upwards, with very thin lips, his chin pointed and prominent, with a pale complexion; but what contributed as much as any thing to favour his disguise of speech, was his loss of teeth. He walked exceedingly upright, was very active and quick in his walk, and was, what we describe a man to be, when we call him *a dapper made man*.

To this person, whose Christian name was *Samuel*, *Mr. Price* affected great age, much bodily infirmity, faint hectic cough, with a disability of almost getting out of the coach. *Samuel* having been seated by the side of *Mr. Price*, was told he was not wanted by *Mr. Price*, but as an under servant to a young nobleman of great fortune, under age, and then in the country, naming Bedfordshire, to whom he was, and had been some years guardian. *Price* then began to enquire into the particulars of *Samuel's* life, of which having been informed, and finding him a young fellow fit for the purpose, honest and ingenious,

talked

talked to him about wages, and *Samuel* enquired whether he was to be in livery or not. To this, *Mr. Price* replied, that he could not really tell, for the young nobleman was a very whimsical character, and that was a circumstance which might be settled hereafter. To carry on the farce, he desired *Samuel* to call his master to the coach to give him a character, which being done and the gentleman giving him such a one as *Price* pretended to approve of, a bargain was struck for 18s. per week, and a direction given to call on *Mr. Brank*, *Price's* assumed name, at No. 39, Titchfield-street, Oxford-street.

Pursuant to the appointment, which was the second or third evening after, *Samuel* went to Titchfield-street, there saw this guardian of a minor nobleman, whom *Samuel* was to serve, by waiting on *Mr. Brank*. At this place, *Price* resumed his discourse respecting his ward, the whimsicalness of his character, the prodigality of his ways, and the hard task he had to prevent him from squandering his money away, especially in dabbling with those deceitful allurances, called *Lottery Tickets*. That, although he was a guardian to the nobleman, he was still obliged to comply with those whims, against his own inclination, and in opposition to all advice and remonstrance. Old *Brank* boasted of the happy prospects for *Samuel* by serving such a master, and *Samuel* talked of his wages and cloaths, and whether he was to be in livery or not? It was concluded, however, that for the present he should procure a drab coat, turned up with red, till the nobleman's pleasure was known, or he came to town. This conversation affords a fine picture of art and simplicity, and leads to a circumstance very well worth regarding—*Samuel* was ordered to get the cloaths

at his own charge and, make out his bill—the former he did, but the latter he had no opportunity, as the reader will soon perceive. And this conduct exactly corresponded with Price's character, who never was known to part with a shilling out of one hand, till he had half a guinea for it in the other. Samuel bought the cloaths, but was never repaid what he laid out for them. A circumstance must be observed here also: Samuel was placed on the left side of the old gentleman, on which side the patch was, so that during the whole of the conversation, Samuel could never see the right side of the old gentleman's face.

Samuel having taken his leave of the old gentleman, was ordered to come again in the evening of the first day of the drawing of the lottery. Mr. Price had also pretended, that he seldom went to the nobleman's town house of an evening, and therefore in order to avoid giving Samuel unnecessary trouble, he was ordered to come to the same place. On that evening Samuel punctually attended, and then Mr. Price pulled out a variety of papers, letters, &c. and told Samuel he had received orders from the thoughtless young nobleman to purchase lottery tickets, as a venture against his coming to town, and in that business he meant to employ Samuel. For this purpose, he produced some seeming bank notes, and gave Samuel two, one of 20l. the other of 40l. He also directed him to take the number and dates of them on a piece of paper, for fear of losing them, and to go to a lottery office in the Hay-market, and with the one of 20l. to purchase *an eight guinea chance*: from thence he was to go to the corner of Bridge-street, Westminster, to buy another out of the 40l. note, and wait at the door of the Parliament-street Coffee-house till Mr. Brank

came to him. With these notes, and data, Samuel went to the Haymarket and bought the eight guinea chance with a 20l. note, having got the balance he went to the corner of Bridge-street, and bought another with the 40l. note, pursuant to directions; and was going to the Parliament-street Coffee-house to meet his master, when, from the opposite side of the way, he was hailed by him, complimented on his speed, and informed that he had been so quick, that he, Brank, had not had time to get to the Coffee-house. He was then interrogated if he had made the purchases, and replying in the affirmative, he was again commended for his diligence. Brank also enquired if any mistake had happened; and all this with a deal of coughing, imbecility of speech, and feigned accent.

We forgot to mention, that when Samuel received the notes, he received also as many canvas bags, as he was ordered to buy shares, or chances, and to put every distinct share, and the balance coming out of each note, into a separate bag, for fear, as his master said the chance of one office might be confused with the chance of another, and Samuel thereby puzzled to know where he had bought the different chances; as by such confusion, or forgetfulness, it might not be recollected where to apply to, in case of a fortunate number.

Mr. Brank having then secured the chances and balances, Samuel was ordered to go to Good-luck's at Charing-cross, from thence to King-street, Covent Garden; York-street, Covent Garden, and purchase some small shares and chances, and to meet his master at the City Coffee-house, Cheapside. To all these places Samuel went,

went, and having bought his numbers, and changed his notes; as he was going along York-street, his master called to him from a coach, pretended he was fortunate in thus seeing him, made *Samuel* step in, got the produce of the forgery, and away they drove to the city.

In their way thither, *Brank* applauded his new servant's dispatch, and gave him more notes, to the amount of 400*l.* with instructions to purchase a variety of shares and chances, at different offices about the *Exchange*; and directed him, as before, to put the chances belonging to each office in a separate bag. *Samuel* having got out of the coach in Cheapside, left his employer in the carriage, and executed his commissions with punctuality and success: he then returned agreeable to his orders, to the City Coffee-house, where he had waited but a few minutes before Mr. *Brank* came hobbling up to him, and took him into a coach that was waiting hard by. *Brank* then began complaining of his health and his infirmities, observing, that the fatigues of business had kept him longer than he expected; but warned *Samuel* to be always exceeding punctual. Price's reason for this punctuality was the dread of a discovery, and to prevent consultations by which he might be detected. In the course of their journey to the end of *Long Acre*, where the coachman was ordered to drive, *Brank* endeavoured to amuse his servant with flattering promises for his attention and fidelity; and at the time of parting with him, even put a guinea into his hand; but whether it was given with a judicious design, or whether it was in consequence of a momentary impulse of generosity, for his having been fortunate enough to transmute his counterfeit Bank paper into

into real 'gold, we will not positively determine, though a tolerable opinion may be formed from this fact; that it was the only money poor *Sam* ever was paid, although he had then obtained cash, and other valid securities, to the amount of fourteen hundred pounds, on those forged notes; but in this and cloaths he had expended seven pounds for his master's use. On parting in *Long Acre*, *Sam* was ordered to be in waiting, for a few days at his old masters in the Strand. As this plan was the routine of his employment it will only be necessary now to inform our readers, that, when ever *Samuel* went into an office, a woman, unobserved by him, always walked in, at the same time looked about her, as if accompanying some body who was in the shop, and as soon as *Samuel* had done his business, the lady likewise walked out.—This woman now proves to have been Mrs. Pounteney, the aunt of Price's wife, described in the advertisement and handbill issued by the Bank. This lady always accompanied Price in a coach whenever he went out, and stuck close to Samuel at every office. As soon as he had safely got out, stepped across the way to Price, who was in the coach, informed him of the success, and then Samuel was hailed, and the property secured by Price, for fear the servant might play the master a trick, and decamp with the booty, Mrs. Pounteney always keeping out of sight, nor did Samuel ever see her during his servitude to Mr. Brank. From Titchfield-street, and during his whole residence there, which was but a week, Price always appeared and went out as Brank; and Mrs. Pounteney always accompanied him, ready to receive the disguise, in case of any accidental discovery; so that if ne-

cessary

cessity required it, he was instantly shifted from Brank to Price, and Price to Brank, as occasion required and thereby Samuel rendered incapable of saying, "*That was the man that had employed him.*" We return now to the narrative: On the next Sunday morning, a coachman came and enquired for Samuel; the master informed the coachman, that though Sam worked, he not did lodge there and that he should not see him till the next morning. The coachman held a parcel in his hand, which he said was for Samuel, which the master desired him to leave, and he should have it the next day. The coachman replied, he was ordered not to leave it, but to take it back in case he could not see the man, and accordingly went across the way with it. There the master saw the elderly gentleman, with whom he had conversed on Samuel's character a few days before, to whom the coachman delivered the parcel, and saw him get into a coach, but in a minute the coachman returned and left it. This parcel contained notes to the amount of 300l. with a letter directing him to buy, on the next morning, a sixteenth, an eight-guinea chance, and a whole ticket; to repeat his purchases at different offices, with the usual precautions, till the whole were changed, and to meet his master, Mr. Brank, at Mill's Coffee-house, Gerrard-street, Soho, at twelve o'clock the next day. Samuel having followed the directions, and succeeded, he went to meet his master as ordered. On enquiry at the Coffee-house, he found that no such man had been there; but in a few minutes, as he was standing at the Coffee-house door, a coachman came up to him and told him, a Gentleman at the corner of Macclesfield-street, wanted to speak with him;

on this Samuel went and found his master, Brank, in a coach, who ordered him to come in, and made him sit on the left hand, as before described, that Samuel could only see the *patch-side* of his master's face. The tickets, shares, chances, and balances having been delivered, Mr. Brank ordered his servant to bid the coachman drive towards Hampstead, and, in the way, he gave Samuel three sixteenths as a reward for his care and diligence. He now talked much of his ward, and said, he would be in town in a day or two, and that he would speak highly of Samuel's industry. On these subjects Brank preached till they reached Mother Black-Cap's, Kentish Town, and then Samuel was bid to order the coachman to turn round. In their way back, Samuel had fresh notes given him to the amount of 500*l.* with the same directions, to lay them out in the same manner about the 'Change, and to meet his master at the same place in the evening, where Mr. Brank said he should dine; but now Samuel was ordered not to dispose of these notes at the same offices he had done the others, and the reason for this need not be explained.

Samuel performed this task also, and just as he got up to the Coffee-house door, a porter accosted him, and conducted him to his master, who was in a coach a little way off. *Samuel* was now blamed for his delay, a feigned anger assumed, with a declaration, that he would not do if not punctual, that he had exceeded his time, and that the nobleman was very particular in time, even to a minute. *Samuel* apologized, *Brank* got hold of the cash, &c. and then ordered him to go forward to the *New Inn Westminster Bridge* and hire a post chaise to carry them to *Greenwich* to meet the nobleman's

ward, who was also his banker, and to whom he was going for more money to purchase more tickets; making, at the same time, several observations on the imprudence and prodigality of his ward.

When they came to Greenwich, *Samuel* was ordered to go to the *Ship* and prepare a dinner, while *Brank* pretended to be negotiating his business; and instructed him also, not to wait longer than three o'clock, but go to dinner, at that time, if he, *Brank*, did not return.

At half past four o'clock *Brank* came hobbling, coughing, and seemingly quite out of breath with fatigue—They drank tea together, at the *Ship*, and afterwards returned to town in the chaise; but here it should be observed, that *Sam* was the paymaster for his dinner and pleasures of the day, under pretence of his master having no change.

From Greenwich they drove to Lombard-street, and then discharged the chaise. There *Sam* received more notes to the amount of 350*l.* which he got rid of in his usual way; and at the City Coffee-house was again fortunate enough to meet his master before he got to the door. He was then ordered to attend the next evening at his master's lodgings, which he accordingly did, and by order three or four times, in the course of which he negotiated 500*l.* more in the same manner.

In negotiating the last sum which *Samuel* received, he visited *Brooksbank's* and *Ruddle's*. Here he was interrogated whom he lived with, &c. and in this conversation honest *Samuel* said he was servant to a very rich nobleman's guardian, that he was at board-wages, and gave his address to his old master, the musical instrument-maker,

maker. Having delivered to his master, Brank the cash, &c. in the usual way, he was told, that perhaps he might not be wanted again for a week, and that he might wait till sent for. Before the expiration of that week, however, Samuel was apprehended, and conducted to Bow street, examined by the Magistrates and Gentlemen of the Bank, where he told his artless tale but to which no credit was given, and he was committed to Tothilfields Bridewell, on suspicion of having counterfeited the notes of the Bank of England.

The astonishment of the servant on his apprehension, the dread he was in of being executed as a forger of counterfeit Bank notes, the horror of being confined in a prison, which to Samuel, was perfectly a new scene, and the impossibility of his giving any clue, whereby the old impostor could be secured, must form in the mind of the reader, a combination of ideas which would be impossible for us to describe. Certain it is, that the directors of the Bank and the Magistrates, were equally astonished at the sagacity of the manufacturer, who had, hitherto, by the most artful of all deceptions, evaded every possibility of detection. Nor could they be at all satisfied of honest Sam's innocence, although his story was, in part confirmed by his former master. It is evident also, they either paid little credit to his story, or they thought, by keeping him in custody, the legality of which is not the present question, to be able, thereby, to arrive at some information which would throw a light on the forger. Whatever were their motives they humanely provided for him, and that circumstance softened his captivity, which otherwise must have made his situation truly deplorable.

Samuel being thus in the hands of the Magistrates, it is necessary to inform the reader that the forged note he had passed at Brooksbank's and Ruddell's, where he had been interrogated, was the means of his apprehension. That note in a day or two got to the Bank, was traced back to that office, and immediate application being made to Bow-street, Samuel was soon paid a visit by Sir S. Wright and Mr. Bond. And thus it was, that the old gentleman *below*, who had hitherto been on very familiar terms with the old gentleman *above*, played off one of his customary ill humours for a moment, had forsaken his friend, and thereby put a temporary period to his progress; for it is evident that matters of this kind cannot be effected without the first mentioned gentleman's constant attendance.

Samuel's examinations were long and frequent, and the whole of the transactions taken as minutely as we have stated them. The scheme laid to secure Mr. Brank was as follows. Samuel had been ordered by Brank to stay till he was sent for, and an inferior officer of Bow-street was stationed at the shop in the Strand, where Samuel worked, in case he should call in the mean time. A few days elapsed, when Samuel received a message to meet his master the next day at Mills's Coffee-house, exactly at eleven o'clock. The plan was accordingly concerted. Samuel was ordered by Mr. Bond not to go till five minutes past the time; the above inferior officer attending at a distance, disguised as a porter, with a knot on his shoulder, and Mr. Bond, dressed as a lady, followed at a small distance. When Samuel came to the Coffee-house, he found that a real

a real porter had that instant been there, and enquired for such a person, in such a livery, and could have been hardly got out of the door. This information Samuel directly communicated to the *lady*, and Samuel was sent back to wait; but the aforefaid old gentleman *below*, who who had been taking a bit of a nap in the mean time, and had, luckily for the old gentleman *above*, waked in an exceeding good humour, was determined to be too many for their mutual enemy; for, having seated himself by the side of his friend Brank, in a hackney coach hard by, he discovered, in the manner he did to the young student at Madrid, the aforefaid momentary conversation between Samuel and the said disguised persons. Both the old gentlemen, therefore, took immediate flight, and hugged and caressed each other on this fortunate discovery, leaving Samuel, the *inferior officer*, and the *lady*, as cruelly disappointed as the said two gentlemen were highly pleased at the escape. The reader, we hope, will not be offended at this imitation of Old Harry,—we mean FIELDING, who never was more severe upon vice, than when he treated it ludicrously. To return: an instant *rust* was made at Titchfield-street, but in vain; they found that Brank had never been there since Samuel and he had left it together; and, as a smack of Scrooge's account of Archer and Aimwell, they did not know who he was, where he came from, or whither he was going. The advertisements again shone forth, the hand bills were showered around, but all in vain; nor was Brank ever heard of till the next Lottery and Christmas times. Poor Samuel, however, still lay in durance vile, but his innocence being tolerably

tolerably established, he was, after having been robbed of seven pounds odd by his master, and suffering eleven months imprisonment, discharged with a present of *twenty pounds*.

The ensuing Lottery, *Price* played the same game with the same effect, but, artfully, with notes of higher value, for 20*l.* and 40*l.* were grown too suspicious—another lad got himself into custody—another *rush* was made, and *Price* missed again by a moment.

His next scheme was an advertisement for a person in the linen drapery business, and with notes of 50*l.* up to a 100*l.* two agents purchased linen drapery at different shops. These two young fellows were likewise detected by having passed an 100*l.* note at Mr. *Woollerton's*, linen draper in *Oxford-street*, who was fortunate enough to recover the whole of his property back, which Mr. Bond had seized at No. 3, on the *Terrace*, in *Tottenham-court road*. In short, to follow Mr. *Price* for six years, through all his proceedings, would be impossible; the account would swell to a folio volume—suffice it to say, he had 45 different names, 45 different disguises, and 45 different lodgings; but that this was his *unfortunate number*!

His various deceptions in the circulation of forged notes, now becoming highly dangerous, he turned his thoughts to a new species equally useful, and for a time equally successful.

Still in disguise, he went to the Coffee-houses about 'Change—got a boy to take 10*l.* to the Bank, giving him directions to the teller, who gives the customary ticket to the cashier who pays; this ticket the lad had orders, instead of pursuing the teller's direction, to the cashier, as

is usual, when out of sight of the teller, to turn round another way, and bring the ticket back to the Coffee-house. There he used to alter the tickets from 10l. to 100l. by adding an o, or a 1 to any other sum where the addition was easy and might puzzle the teller, as from 50 to 150, &c. and then send it by another hand, to the cashier, who paid it unsuspectingly.

This scheme was his last, and he practised it, till having received a Bank note which he passed at Mr. Aldous's, a Pawn-broker in *Berwick-street*, as we at first said, he was there apprehended.

This note had had many indorsements, and Price having disguised several of them, by additions to the names; and his friend, the *aforesaid old GENTLEMAN*, not being then at his elbow probably then engaged in some other equally honourable employ, Mr. Price left one indorsement standing entire. This led to Mr. Aldous's, who knew him by the name of Powel, where he came two or three times a week, had pledged things of great value, and whose residence Mr. Aldous could never find out, although he caused him to be frequently followed.

An officer was then, by Mr. Clarke's suggestion placed there till he came, which was the next day but one, when he was amused and kept in conversation till Mr. Clarke's arrival, who secured and brought him to *Bow-street*.

These suspicions were almost *tantamount* to proof, of his being the celebrated Mr. Patch, which name he got from the *patch over his eye*. Thus were the gentlemen of the Bank made happy in the detection of so dangerous an offender, and the only discovery they had now to make, which

which was of the utmost importance, was, where the female companion and implements were concealed, and which, by a manœuvre of Mr. Clarke's, were discovered, but not till after his death——this we shall relate in turn. His behaviour, when first in custody, was exceedingly insolent—Mr. Bond, who during Price's residence in King-street Covent-Garden, was clerk at Bow street, had visited him on account of some money due to Sir John Fielding's maid servant, gained by insuring with Price—He had refused the payment to the servant, not knowing with whom he had insured, but when he was informed who the girl's master was, he waited on Sir John, and at last, but very reluctantly he paid the money. When taken to Bow street, he taxed Mr. Bond, who is now a magistrate, with prejudice against him on account of the old affair, and complained that he should not have justice done him. He laid the same accusation against Abraham Newhall, Esq. principal cashier of the Bank, who would do him every possible injury, on account of some former antipathy that gentleman conceived to him. Thus conscious of his fault, he imputed revenge to every gentleman who either performed the duty of making him amenable to the laws of his country, or, who went forward even officially, to further the calls of justice.

One thing we must not omit to mention ; when he was under examination, Sir Sampson Wright, suddenly called out Sam, who stood behind Price ; Sam answered, and appeared to his old master, who started as at a ghost ; but recollecting himself, he assumed his old *congee*, and made a polite bow to his old servant, no doubt either to awaken his

humanity, or hint at what he might expect if he disclaimed him. The fact was, Samuel could only swear to his voice, but could not have the least idea of his person or features.—Being then committed to Tothilfields Bridewell, he turned his thoughts, naturally enough, to the destruction of the implements. Well knowing that nothing could be got out of Mrs. Price, or any of his family, to affect him, he made no scruple of declaring, when under examination, that his lodgings were at a Cheesemonger's in the neighbourhood of Tottenham-Court Road; equally secure, that nothing could be found there, to afford the least suspicion of his being the forger described under the character of Patch. Determined to destroy every thing that could lend the least assistance to that discovery, he sent for Mrs. Price and his eldest son, a fine youth about fifteen years of age, and then, to her great surprise, communicated to her those lodgings, and the circumstances respecting her aunt.

By the son he sent a letter to Mrs. Pounteney, informing her of his situation, desiring her instantly to destroy every atom of the apparatus, clothes, &c. To get this letter safe out of prison, he had recourse to an expedient as artful as it was successful. He told his son, that it was often the custom of the keepers of prisons to search the persons of visitors to prisoners; and as he was charged with an offence, to detect which he had every expedient to dread, his own safety required him to have recourse to equal stratagems to frustrate their designs. Accordingly, having wrote the letter, he desired his son to take off his shoe, which being done, Mr. Price tore up the inner sole, and under it put the letter to Mrs. P——, with this injunction, that if he should be asked any questions at

the gate, whether he had any thing from his father to carry any where, to say no; if they attempted to search him, to submit to the search quietly, and with temper. This contrivance, and these directions, seem to have been the result of a knowledge of the practice of prisons, and which no Newgate bird could have schemed better to have defeated. We do not indeed know, nor have we heard, that he was ever before confined for felony; he was often in custody for debt, and two or three times confined in the King's Bench prison; but there, such secret conveyances are unnecessary, and he could not derive his knowledge from any other source than suspicions founded upon hearsay, and what his own good sense dictated to him. Thus prudent and thus guarded, in his conveyance of a letter to the very person, whom the Bank of England would have given any sum to discover, the manœuvre had its effect, and the letter reached the aunt in safety. The reason why the gentlemen of the Bank were so solicitous to discover the abode of this woman is evident. They knew that wherever she was, the dangerous engines were; that to get at her, would have been getting into possession of all that was so destructive to the community, and therefore the destruction of them was, naturally enough, the first object of their hearts.

We must here, for a while, leave Mr. Price in his confinement, and accompany the letter to Mrs. Pountney. This shrewd woman, on the receipt of the letter, with an admirable presence of mind, came down into the kitchen where the maid was, and mildly blamed her for keeping so small a fire in such cold weather. She ordered her to take the cheeks out of the grate, and throw on fresh coals; which being done, and the fire beginning to be somewhat high, she artfully told the
maid

maid she had received a letter from her maller, who was gone abroad, informing her that the clothes he had lately worn, he had discovered to be infested by the plague, contracted during the time of his being last out of England; and that he had ordered her to burn the whole of them immediately, for fear of the infection spreading, and endangering the lives of all in the house.

She accordingly brought down every article of clothes, which Mr. Price had concealed himself in, under the character of Patch, and laying them on a heap on the kitchen floor, took a cullender and sprinkled them with water till they were sufficiently damp to prevent their blazing. When this was done, she put them on the fire, and as soon as they began to blaze again, took them off, turned and watered them afresh, laying the unburnt part downwards. This she continued till the whole were consolidated into a cake, and by that means reduced every atom to a powder. Thus with a presence of mind, and a dexterity unparallelled in such an extremity, let what would come to pass, whatever could affect him as *Mr. Price*, nothing could then discover him by dress, in the character of *Patch*.

Having thus effected one principal end of the letter, she then turned her thoughts to the other—the destruction of the materials with which Mr. Price had so industriously carried on his ingenious practices. The servant had a sister living in the neighbourhood, and Mr. Price having had occasion once or twice for a carpenter, through the medium of this sister, one had been employed by Mrs. Pounteney, but to whom Price had never been visible. She therefore ordered the servant to go for that carpenter, in order to take down the wood frame, presses, instruments, &c. with which Price had made his paper, and printed off his notes from the

plates, all which were exactly fitted up in the mode and manner of a copper-plate printer's materials. While the maid was out for the carpenter, Mrs. Pounteney took the copper-plates, &c. put them into the fire, and when thoroughly burnt through, and red hot, took them out, and let them lay till they were cool, whereby they were reduced to a pliability capable of being twisted and broke with ease. Having effected this, she reduced them to very small pieces, and with a large bundle of small wires, with which Mr. Price had manufactured the paper and water marks, gave them to the son, desiring him to take them to the dust heaps behind the houses, in the adjacent fields, and there distribute them from heap to heap, kicking the dust over the pieces as he distributed them, in order to prevent them from being seen by those, whose occupations daily lead them to the dust heaps; and also, if seen, they might not be found in such parcels, as to occasion a surprise, or future enquiry. The lad having obeyed his great aunt in these particulars, the remains of these plates lay there, till, by a stratagem of Mr. Clarke's, they were found and brought to Bow-street by dust-men, who could have no idea of their use, and rewarded as promised by Mr. Clarke. The carpenter having taken down the apparatus, and being paid for his trouble, was dispatched; every thing then was brought down, and reduced to ashes, so that hardly any thing remained a body, but the bits of plates and wires, which could not be reduced.

The step Mr. Clarke took after Price's death, to find out Mrs. Pounteney and the implements had its effect. Mrs. Price, who, as we have before said, was informed by her husband of the place of Mrs. Pounteney's abode, discovered it. She was taken into custody—ingenuously told

every circumstance from beginning to end, which were of a nature almost exceeding human belief. The frame with which he made the last bank notes was found at the house, and all the implements employed in making the paper, with the press for printing the notes, at a smith's in the neighbourhood, whither the carpenter who took them down had carried them by Mrs. Pounteney's direction. The whole of the mystery discovered, the principal offender dead, the apparatus found and destroyed, and the gentlemen of the Bank fully satisfied that no accomplice lurked behind the curtain, not wishing to take the life of a woman away, have humanely discharged her; and, as well-wishers to the community, we hope her escape will teach her not to abuse a lenity, which seems to have been founded on a mistaken humanity.—Our opinion on this point is rather confirmed by this fact. On a second search, the frame with which Price made his paper was found, and being asked by Mr. Clarke what it was, with an art and composure which proved her a perfect disciple of her tutor's, replied, "It is an instrument I use for mangling."

We have now concluded our account of Mr. Price, from the time of his commencing his different schemes on the Bank, in the year 1780, to his last hour.

His natural assurance was exhibited in the following measure he took to try if he was even suspected. He would go to the coffee-houses about 'Change, appear as Price, enquire for Mr. Norton, write a letter, and leave it at the bar. In ten minutes he would come in again as Mr. Norton, take his own letter, drink his coffee, and away. A boy, who had two or three times taken his cash from the teller and put it into his face;—threatened his

appre-

prison. The boy could not identify him; the mother could, and, in spite of all that could be said, persisted in her knowledge. We hear for a fact they were both before the magistrate at Bow-street. Mr. Price had been three or four times brought up there, to be viewed only by the persons who had taken forged notes of him in different disguises;—the event was, he saw the impossibility of escaping the slow but sure hand of justice. He told the keeper he had been *betrayed*, and the next morning was found hanging. The invention, the method, and the means he took, were of a piece with his usual caution and deliberation. He informed his son, that the people of the prison came into his room sooner than he wished: that, in his situation, he had something secret to write, which they might get at by suddenly coming upon him; that he wished to prevent it, and gave his son money to purchase two gimblets and a sixpenny cord, pointing out to him how he would stick the gimblets in from post to post, and tie the cord across the door, which opened inwards, and thereby prevent any person from coming in till he pleased to permit them. The scheme had its effect,—he fastened the two gimblets under two hat-screws, and thus, having four securities to prevent his falling, he was found the next morning hanging without coat or shoes.

Under his waistcoat were found three papers. One was a petition to the King, praying protection for his wife, and eight innocent children, all of whom, he said, had never offended. In this petition he stated, that he had written a pamphlet with a view to prevent a war between the crowns of England and Denmark, and to rescue the cha-

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tained the most warm and grateful thanks to Mr. Fenwick, the keeper of the prison, for the many obligations he was under to him for his consistent indulgence and favours, with a prayer that the Almighty would be his keeper, and reward him for it in due time. The last consisted of an affectionate leave of his wife—he begged her forgiveness for every injury he had done her, and intreated her attention to their offspring; concluding with a hope of their meeting in Heaven, where their present miseries would have an end. One thing is observable:—In these papers, formed with consideration, he most solemnly denied every thing. The Coroner's Inquest sat on his body, and brought in their verdict *felo de se*, in consequence of which he was buried in the cross-road near the prison, leading to Chelsea.

In justice to an individual, we ought not to omit mentioning, that as several news-papers have propagated a report that Mr. Price had borrowed of Mr. Aldous, a pawn-broker, whom we have before mentioned, a large service of plate, and left bank-notes as a security for his returning it, we assure the reader that it is wholly false and groundless. Mr. Aldous took every step in his power to discover the impostor, and was the principal person by whose assistance he was apprehended. He had pledged things of value several times there in the name of Powel—Mrs. Pounteney had been there on the same errand, as Mrs. Powel—had represented her husband as having an important post at St. James's. They had talked each of the other, and each of them had pledged the same gold watch at different times. But on his apprehension he denied any knowledge of the woman, even to Mr. Aldous's face;—threatened his
 appre-

apprehenders with actions;—ridiculed them for not finding, among others, a 10l. note which he had in his fob under his watch, and which he produced, although that identical note was one of the notes delivered by the cashier upon one of the forged tickets. We mention these circumstances to shew how weak and inefficacious is all the art and subtlety of man, when guilt is suddenly attacked.

As soon as the news of Price's death had reached Mr. Clarke's ears, he posted to Mrs. Price. He informed her of the shocking event, and then urged her, as the last act of humanity she could perform to her deceased husband, to discover where the woman was with whom Mr. Price had been connected, and by this means her husband might afterwards be suffered to have Christian interment, although the verdict of the Coroner's inquest must be formally complied with.

The proposal had its effect—tendernefs to her husband prevailed; her son, who was by, earnestly implored his mother to tell, or suffer him to tell, who, and where the woman was. Mrs. Price consented, and Mr. Clarke was directed to the house, where every thing was found that could give satisfaction to the gentlemen of the Bank, and a most important service thereby done the community.

We cannot close this unparalleled history without observing, that the body, which was buried pursuant to the sentence, lay a week before it was taken away. From that circumstance, as well as the manner in which it was taken, there is little room to doubt, but that, as his *life* was a *disgrace* to society, his *bones* are now an *ornament* in the *rotunda* of some anatomical exhibition, under which may be justly inscribed, *HIC NICER EST.*